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ELECTIONS.—*Edward Arber, A.K.C.; John Henry Barkhouse; William Best; Charles Albert Brophy; Lord Calthorpe; John Pincher Founthorpe; George Fleming; John Townshend Fowler; David G. B. Gardyne; Lord John Hay, C.B.; Henry Hull; Captain Alexander Innes; Andrew Jardine; Robert Jardine; John Kirke; Edward C. Lowndes; Major-General James Matthie; Jerome John Mercier; Thomas Middleton; H. Byron Moore; Joseph Pattinson; George Herbert Pember; Henry W. Reeves; John Thornton Rogers; William Dukin Spear; Miles Staveley; William Tegg; Griffith Thomas; Archibald Travers; Hon. Edward Fiennes Tvisleton; Thomas Francis Wade, C.B.; Right Hon. Spencer Walpole, M.P.; Joseph Wilks.*

EXHIBITIONS.—Two Models—one of Gibraltar, the other Lines of Torres Vedras—by R. T. Wilde and Sons; presented through Admiral Collinson.

The first Paper read was—

“*A communication from Mr. Tinné relative to the Dutch Ladies' Expedition from Khartûm up the River Bahr-el-Ghazal,*” commencing 26th February, at a point on the White Nile.

DR. HEUGLIN, who accompanies the expedition, states (*vide* Petermann's ‘*Geographische Mittheilungen*’) that it left Khartûm on the 24th January, 1863, with the intention of tracking the western affluents of the Nile, so as, if possible, to penetrate from this side into the country of the Nyam-Nyams.

A very favourable wind brought them on the third day to El-Eis, the most beautiful part of the White Nile. On the 31st January they passed Tefafan, 300 feet high, and 3 miles from the river, which is not, as hitherto supposed, of volcanic origin. On the 1st February the flotilla reached Hellat-Kaka, the residence of the Viceroy's deputy, a wretched nest of huts; and on the 4th passed the mouth of the Sobat. From this point for more than 200 miles the expedition had to work its way through the swamps of the Bahr-el-Ghazal, and on the 5th February reached Lake No; the goal of the expedition being the Lake Rek, or Mishra Rek. This part of the voyage was exceedingly tedious, the river resembling a narrow canal, full of curves and windings, walled in by impenetrable thickets of reeds or else mud-banks. Huge herds of elephants were passed, with hippopotami, buffalo, and other wild animals; but hunting is impossible, owing to the nature of the soil.

At length on the 10th March the entire flotilla reassembled. Here it became necessary to take the paddles off the steamer and proceed in small boats, one of which towed the steamer. In the last stages of the navigation of the Ghazal its banks were covered with

forests of ambadsh (*anemone mirabilis*), which fringes the banks in narrow strips, and grows in rather deep water. These forests Dr. Heuglin compares to rows of well-used brooms, very fragile, and from 20 to 25 feet high.

We now quote from the correspondence of the ladies.

“Mishra of Rek, 26th March.

“I write at present from one of the most singular spots on the globe, which can only be reached by a route as singular. We pushed along up the Ghazal for three or four days, the river in front always appearing to have come to an end in a sea of herbage, alternating with bulrushes, &c. It proves, however, to be an immense marsh, through which the boats are slowly pushed, the brushwood being beaten down with sticks, or cut with hatchets and scythes. After four days of this exhausting work we arrived at a small pond or lagoon, in which were crowded together, in the utmost confusion, twenty-five vessels of various descriptions. This was the Mishra or port of Rek. Here we had to stay to get porters, and only now can detail our plans. Dr. Heuglin has gone eight or ten days inland, to see whether he can find any, when we shall proceed to the spot selected for our passing the rainy season. The equipment of the expedition is something incredible, as we must carry with us ten months' provisions and stores—amongst other things, a ton and a half of beads, 8 bars of copper, 12,000 cowrie shells, pepper, salt, &c.; and as each porter only carries 40 lbs. load, you can form an idea of the immense number we shall require—above 200 porters at the very least. There is absolutely no traffic along the river, except for the *naggars* or merchandise boats in search of ivory; a pair of tusks fetching at Khartum perhaps 25*l*. These *naggars* convey provisions to the various stations or *zeribas*, as they are called, taking back ivory in exchange.

“May 13.—All is well now; we have 80 porters; we know whither we are bound; in short, all is right. Dr. Heuglin is quite pleased with the interior—pretty country, good water, and hospitable people, and is enchanted with the birds; quite rare and new, he says.

“We have had a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Petherick, who, hearing we were here at the Mishra, came to see us to offer to be of use to us, which they have been in many respects. They have had dreadful ill luck. They set off too late from Khartum in March, and the wind being adverse caused them much delay and damage, so they had to abandon their boats and proceed by land from Abukaka. This was the end of August, 1862; and it being the rainy season, that plan proved equally impracticable. They were delayed by

affrays with inhospitable natives and by illness, and only arrived at Gondokoro in February last, five days after Captain Speke, who, not knowing what had become of them, and believing them from the current reports to be drowned, accepted Mr. Baker's provisions, boat, and men, so that the Pethericks had to retain all they had sent forward for Captain Speke's requirements. These we have taken over from them,—beer, wine, tea, soup, pearl barley, Leman's biscuits, a gutta percha boat, and what not. It is strange to find these luxuries here, and we have enjoyed them famously.

"June 1.—We left our boats on the 17th May, and landed our baggage, in order that the porters might see what they had to carry. I cannot say that the first part of the country is pretty, but it is very peculiar; the trees beautiful, with a succession of neat villages, and pools of water. We arrived at a village called Afog on the 20th. Here my daughter fell ill with fever; and the next day our soldiers rebelled. They complained that they had nothing to eat, although they had five bullocks a-day; then they said they had not enough *doura* (grain of the country); but after some patient remonstrances, they all came, one by one, to beg pardon. So we arranged that as many as we could spare should go on to Ali-au-Mori's station.

[The illness alluded to, and also that of Dr. Heuglin, delayed the party for some days. We resume our extracts.]

"Once more *en route*, we shall, I trust, arrive safe and sound at the mountain, Casinka, where we are to remain till the weather is fine and the earth dry. It must be a beautiful country, plenty of game, and very good people, though no Europeans have been there. We have already sent off three companies of porters, about 400 men in all. They carry but little, say 40 lbs. each, and all on their heads.

"Afog, where we are staying, is a very pretty village, with rich cultivated patches, full of *doura*, besides a sort of ground-nuts and quantities of pumpkins. The trees are magnificent, and the cows, goats, and sheep abundant. The people live in beehive-looking huts, of which each family has three or four, for themselves and flocks. We have rivers to pass before we come to where we hope to stay, near the mountain Casinka. And we are now going to Ali-au-Mori's *zeriba*, where we have sent on all our provisions. From there we hope to cross to Casinka; and thence we are only two days from the Nyam-Nyam, our goal.

"July 1.—I know you will be glad to hear how, after all our trouble and expense, the new country pleases us, and that, though still weak and subject to attacks of fever, our invalids stand the journey very well: my daughter has a *ngerib*, arranged with a covering to keep

off the sun, and her mattress on it, so that she reposes very agreeably. We have 192 negroes for our immediate luggage; we have 38 donkeys, but they suffer so much from climate and neglect, and are so cruelly overburdened when we allow them to be loaded at all, that now they are kept for the sick or tired human beings. We take very short journeys, and always find a village to sleep in. The two first days, after leaving the Mishra, was not pretty; but there were some beautiful trees and so many rich villages, that it could not be called ugly; thousands of birds made it gay—such beautiful stations, belonging to rich negroes or merchants, such neat houses, surrounded by a high hedge of the poison-plant, and such a number of cows and sheep. After a while the trees became thicker and higher, and we were one whole day's journey in a wood of gardenias in full bloom, with jasmine and sensitive-plants. Afterwards the woods became forests of high majestic trees, and the ground covered with sweetest flowers; we had not time to pick many, as we are hurrying on. We crossed the river Djour on the 16th June, which took only six minutes for each party: but there were only seven boats for all our luggage and people.

“You can form no idea of the frequency and intensity of the storms—wind, hail, rain, thunder, and lightning—which makes us all the more anxious to reach our camping-ground for the rainy season. We had one on our landing from our boats at the Mishra; another just after our arrival at Afog, while we were pitching our tents; that of my daughter was blown down when half up, and herself nearly smothered in its folds. The severe cold and wetting she then experienced brought on a fever, which prostrated her for more than a week, and, as already mentioned, brought her almost to death's door. Our last experience was just after crossing the Djour, when, not having succeeded, owing to the stupidity of the vakeel, in bringing over our tents and baggage, the whole party were exposed throughout the night to the pelting of the storm, there being no village or shelter of any sort near. Fortunately the storm had no evil effect upon the health of any one of the party.

“I am writing this in the village where poor Dr. Steudner died. We did not meet a caravan, as we expected, and came on 21st June to a zeriba or village belonging to Buselli, a foreign merchant of Khartum, whose reception of us was magnificent, but who proved afterwards most extortionate. We are going to hire a small zeriba he has for 30 thalers, which we succeeded in getting, after he had attempted suddenly to charge 200 thalers. But it is impossible to tell how he teased us. First he turned out all our soldiers, and when we built a shed for them he asked hire for it! Then he has

once offered and refused negroes, and changes his terms every day ; one day lets us have as much *doura* as we want, another refuses to let us have anything for our people to eat, and tries to make us pay 9 thalers for what costs at Khartûm only one. The whole country is one field of *doura*, yet he will not permit his negroes to sell us any.

"The origin and system of these merchants are different here from the White Nile. A man comes into a village, sets himself down, and begins by buying ivory and making friends with the negroes, promises to protect them if they will take the ivory to the ships in the Mishra, and he either remains himself or leaves a vakeel. He builds a house or two, surrounds it with palisades, and, by degrees becoming master of the village, then proceeds to attack a neighbouring hostile village, and, having guns, of course they conquer. That village he attaches to the first, and so on till he has a good many villages, when he forces the negroes of the whole to furnish *doura* for his soldiers or fighting men, and they submit.

"We heard to-day from a party coming down from Casinka that it is no longer possible to reach the mountain before the rains : we shall, therefore, be shut up for the next four months, but it is very safe."

Writing before their departure from the Mishra on 6th May, finished 16th May, 1863, they had remarked :—

"There is no chance of our being able to come back here to rejoin our boats till December or January next. The rains do not finish till November, and then the rivers are so swollen, and the mud so deep, no animals can pass, nor are there any boats for us—nothing but a hollowed-out tree or a bundle of sticks joined together, which the blacks go about on : however, we shall make it out as well as we can.

"There is abundance of game everywhere. Of quadrupeds, we have seen giraffes and gazelles, and the recent tracks of elephants and buffaloes, large herds of which Dr. Heuglin fell in with on his previous short visit, when in search of porters, but they are now scared away by the noise of our large caravan. Of birds, there are francolin (rails), black partridges, and guinea fowls. Dr. Heuglin has collected specimens of 60 new and rare sorts of birds, which he has sent to the Museum of the University of Leyden."

The PRESIDENT, in conveying the thanks of the Society to Mr. Tinné for his interesting communication, repeated what he has often expressed—his admiration of these adventurous ladies, who had explored farther to the westward of the White Nile than probably any European. He then called upon

MR. TINNÉ, who added that it was a remarkable and adventurous expedition, organised and conducted entirely by two ladies. No doubt, in the course

of time, we should, through the assistance of Dr. Heuglin, acquire some most interesting scientific information. The country through which and into which they were travelling was one of great interest, and should they succeed in the object which he understood they had in view—which was to penetrate into the river districts of Central Africa, lying between the White Nile and the supposed mountainous districts of that part of Africa—the result would conduce to geographical knowledge. Without doubt, the large accession of water into the Nile was derived not only from the lake discovered by Captain Speke and Captain Grant, but also from other sources; and if these sources should be found in the regions visited by these ladies, the discovery would tend to elucidate the geography of Central Africa. In one of their letters they expressed surprise that no Englishman had spirit enough to go into that country.

At the request of the President, CAPTAIN GRANT next addressed the Meeting. He said that Captain Speke and himself at Khartum met one of the three ladies who had ascended the White Nile to Gondokoro on their first expedition, but had not joined that up the Bahr-el-Ghazal, where she was detained by illness and unable to accompany her sister and niece up the Bahr-el-Ghazal. They spent many hours daily in her society during the ten days they remained at Khartum, and Captain Speke wrote out instructions for her fellow-travellers then up the Bahr-el-Ghazal. They both strongly endeavoured to dissuade the ladies from penetrating into the country on account of the malaria which arose from the inundations, and which might prove disastrous to the expedition. He did not wish to prognosticate evil, but if anything could be done to prevent their exposing themselves to risk in that dangerous country, it would be desirable. He really hoped Mr. Tinné would recommend them to return, and so escape the fevers, and get out of the hands of those rascals the Turks, who would rob them of every sou, as the Meeting had just heard. He and Captain Speke came down the same latitude, and they met with nothing but immense wastes of tall reeds. There are no mountains in that latitude at all; only solitary hills covered with scrub, a few trees in the plains, and palms and acacias in the villages. Ascending the Nile up as far as the 5th degree north, there is nothing but eternal rush all the way. It was a most uninteresting and desolate country. The ladies traversed this region in going up to Gondokoro, and, of course, as soon as they saw a hill they were delighted with the country, and imagined that they must regain health and be restored to vigour. To Captain Speke and himself, coming from the rich and beautiful countries of the Equator, the region in question bore a most uninviting aspect. He must also point out the delusive nature of the idea which the ladies entertained, that they could get the Turks to carry loads.

[The PRESIDENT explained that the Turks spoken of were ivory traders, who had large establishments in the country, occupying several villages, and having the control of a great body of negroes. They appear to have received these ladies with a great show of hospitality, but the very next day tried to extort vast sums of money from them.]

CAPTAIN GRANT said the ladies had engaged 192 of these men as porters to carry loads of 40 lbs. each on their heads, and to go eight or ten miles daily. They had made one day's march, and already there had been a mutiny; and the ladies would find that, before they had gone ten marches into the interior, these fellows will have raised half-a-dozen mutinies. The men on that side of Egypt will not carry loads, but they will ride on donkeys and bullocks, and overload them shamefully. In Speke's expedition he engaged men from Zanzibar, a different caste of men altogether, and they carried 60 lbs. each man; but upon reaching the ivory traders' camps they were derided by these Turks, who sneered at them—"You are all women, to carry loads;" the consequence was, that the men were completely spoiled and ruined.

The EARL of DONOUGHMORE said he wished to draw attention to one point

which had been incidentally suggested by the Paper. It appeared that there is a very large drainage running into the White Nile from the Bahr-el-Ghazal. We had got some notion of the quantity of water which came down from the lake discovered by Captain Speke and Captain Grant. During the present season there had been a disastrous inundation of the Nile in Egypt, causing an immense loss of property and a considerable loss of life. Now, this inundation had arisen from natural causes which it was the duty of science to endeavour to discover; he therefore thought it would be very desirable that some steps should be taken by the scientific gentleman who was accompanying the ladies, upon his return, to compare the outflow of water from the Bahr-el-Ghazal with the outflow from the White Nile. That comparison would enable us to judge to a certain extent as to the amount of country drained by these two outfalls. We now knew where the White Nile came from, but we did not know the extent of the country whose waters drained into the Bahr-el-Ghazal. It might turn out that a considerable, possibly the larger, proportion of the water which formed the inundation of the Nile came from that quarter, and not from the White Nile. Therefore, a careful comparison of the quantity of water discharged by these two confluent rivers would be most valuable for the purposes of science.

The PRESIDENT said they were extremely indebted to Lord Donoughmore for this suggestion. He might observe that the ladies were really on the right road to obtain this knowledge; for their great object was to reach the mountainous region whence the Bahr-el-Ghazal flowed. Should they succeed in reaching that region—which he was in hopes they would, notwithstanding the dissuasion of Captains Speke and Grant—and should they discover that its waters are thrown off to the Nile on the one side, and to Lake Tchad and the other great lakes to the westward on the other, it would be a most important geographical result.

MR. TINNE stated that Dr. Heuglin corresponded with 'Petermann's Journal,' a recent number of which contains a series of valuable astronomical and scientific observations which Dr. Heuglin had transmitted to Germany. (This number unfortunately has not yet been forwarded to the Society.)

The PRESIDENT then read a letter from M. Du Chaillu, announcing his arrival at Acra, and stating that, having become a proficient in astronomical observation, he hoped soon to send most useful information, and thanked the Society for the assistance they had rendered him by supplying instruments, &c.

2. The next Paper, detailed in an abridged form, the observations of COLONEL PELLY on the geographical capabilities of the Persian Gulf as an area of trade.

COLONEL PELLY first describes the different suzerainties of the territories abutting on the Gulf, and briefly notices the various tribes that inhabit its shores—as the Chaab Arabs from the Karoon to the Hindéean; the territory directly held under the Shah, extending from Bushire to Lingah; territory leased by the Shah to the Imaum of Muscat, consisting of Bunder-Abbass and the coast northwards to Lingah, and southwards to a point not definitely specified by treaty, but tacitly recognised, as also the island of Kishm (on which is Hormuz) and its dependencies; territory of the Imaum